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## DILEMMAS OF EUROPEAN REARMAMENT

by William Henry Chamberlin

Whether and how far the United States should support the rearmament of Western Europe is one of the most complicated and difficult problems that ever perplexed and divided the American people. And this is only one of several dilemmas that have arisen in this connection. There is the dilemma of whether the French are able and willing to make a major military effort themselves and to permit the rearming of the Germans. There is the further dilemma of whether and on what terms the Germans will consent to assume the burdens and risks of rearmament.

One could make an extremely strong case for either of two flatly contradictory propositions: that Western Europe cannot be defended; that Western Europe, in the interest of American elementary security, must be defended.

Consider the arguments for the negative, as stated in recent addresses by Mr. Joseph P. Kennedy and Mr. Herbert Hoover. Mr. Kennedy's case against trying to make a stand on the line of the Elbe or the Rhine is summed up as follows:

"French military power is only a shadow of its former self, and a strong minority of Communist sympathizers keeps France in endless political turmoil. The military strength of Britain is one-fourth of what it was in 1946 and she shows every inclination to avoid the heavy burdens that would be involved in rebuilding it. West Germany has revealed, to date, no disposition to develop effective military strength. Italy is hopelessly ineffective and Greece can hardly police her own small territory. Where is there in all Europe any buffer against a massed Russian onslaught? Worse than this, where is there any determination to create such a buffer?"

A similar line of argument was presented by Herbert Hoover, who suggested that we should be inviting another Korea if we gave Europe "another man or another dollar" unless the European countries "organized and equipped combat divisions of such large numbers as would erect a sure dam against the Red flood".

The former President outlined a strategy for America in relation to the land mass of Eurasia quite similar to the strategy which Great Britain employed toward the land mass of Europe until the First World War. This was an intensive build-up of air and naval power, comparable with

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the British reliance on sea power alone before the days of submarines and atom bombs. The former President suggested that one American flank should rest on Britain, the other on Japan.

Additional confirmation of the grave moral weakness of France as a partner in an anti-Communist coalition comes from a source which cannot be suspected of indifference to the disastrous consequences of the spread of Communist power. Writing in The New Leader of December 18, Mr. David Dallin, in a dispatch from Paris, bluntly states:

"France is the weakest link in the chain of Western power. . . . A new Munich will find more support in France than in any other country.

"Shortsighted? Perhaps. But this is France as she actually is today, and it is on this France -- not on the imaginary France of wishful thinkers -- that we must base our calculations."

II

So there is a powerful case for the argument that America cannot afford to spend its own strength in a vain attempt to help a Europe too weak to defend itself or to use American aid effectively. But there are also strong arguments for the proposition that an American retreat from Europe would prove to be a major political, economic and military disaster which might mark the beginning of the decline and fall of the American Republic.

At the present time there are some two hundred and fifty million Europeans outside the Iron Curtain. By conquering China, while the State Department was daydreaming about China's Reds as nice agrarian reformers who scarcely knew there was a city named Moscow, Stalin acquired an enormous pool of manpower. But China is backward economically and poor in natural resources.

In many ways the 250 million Europeans, after being broken into Communist regimes by the usual methods of terrorism and purges, would be a greater asset to the Soviet empire than almost twice that number of Chinese. The present output of the Ruhr and the French and Belgian steel industries would double overnight Soviet potential in this most important strategic material.

The moral effect of the loss to Communist tyranny of the historic peoples of Europe would be tremendous and would be felt as keenly in Latin America as in this country. As the British specialist in geopolitics, Halford Mackinder, has pointed out -- Asia, Europe and Africa represent a world island, far exceeding the smaller American hemispheric island in area, population and resources.

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The surrender of Europe would presumably mean the abandonment of this world island to more or less swift Communist infiltration and conquest. This would go far to neutralize the one weapon in which the United States is clearly superior to the Soviet Union, the atom bomb. The areas which are generally recognized as most suitable for the launching of strategic bombing of vital Soviet economic centers, Spain, Turkey, North Africa, Denmark, would be lost.

It is very doubtful whether either Great Britain or Japan could be held in the face of the tremendous air and naval strength and manpower resources of adjacent continental land areas dominated by Communism. Our main source of uranium is in the Belgian Congo, which is not defensible by air and sea power and which is well within the limits of the "world island".

III

European rearmament is not only an American dilemma. It is also a dilemma for the continental powers most directly concerned, France and Germany. The contribution of such small countries as the Netherlands, Belgium, Denmark and Norway is obviously limited.

Despite the fact that the Western Allies have appointed General Eisenhower as commander of a European defense force, France has made little progress in military recovery and Germany has been allowed to make no progress at all. France was shaken in morals and denuded of arms by the debacle of 1940. American military equipment is just beginning to flow into France and the French, drained by protracted colonial war in Indo-China, have only succeeded in organizing a few substandard divisions.

Unable so far to make an impressive military effort themselves, the French have been dragging their heels on the American proposals, (which have been very insistent since last September) that German armed units be utilized for the defense of Europe. French fear is not so much of a new German attack as of hostile Russian action, with German rearmament as its pretext. There is also some apprehension that a West Germany which had regained military strength might drag the West into a war for the reunion of the country, and for the reconquest of Germany's lost eastern territories.

That the Germans are not eager to rush to arms apparently came as a surprise to American public opinion. But, apart from the exigencies of German internal politics and the desire of Social Democrat Schumacher to oust Christian Democrat Adenauer as Prime Minister by outbidding him on the price to be exacted for German rearmament, German reluctance is

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both natural and understandable. The Germans see all around them the human and material wreckage of the last war, the cripples, the destitute refugees, the vast acreage of ruins in every large city.

They are as susceptible as the French to the argument that a little rearmament might be worse than none at all, should it provoke Russian occupation. And there is a certain amount of Schadenfreude in the spectacle of the proud conquerors and self-righteous occupiers, who had combined with the forces of Asiatic Communism to crush Germany, now asking German military aid. The instinctive reply of many Germans is "Ohne uns" (Without us).

IV

To create a workable system of American-European co-operation, to reconcile French and German viewpoints, to satisfy at once the pleas of a defeated and defeatist Europe and the suspicions of an increasingly isolationist America -- all this seems calculated to tax the capacity of a greater statesman than one can see on the Washington scene.

1951 opens as a year of great and tragic uncertainty. Unless the tide of popular protest becomes irresistible, the odds are that the policy of trying to protect European rearmament behind a shield of the atomic bomb threat will be pursued. It is hardly probable that America would withdraw from its obligations under the North Atlantic Pact. But the doubts and questionings touched off by the speeches of Kennedy and Hoover will persist and debate will rage and this debate in turn will affect sentiment in Europe. It may furnish useful shock treatment if Europeans see that the United States is not necessarily bound to come to their defense. Or it may strengthen dreams of neutrality and passive and defeatist sentiment.

The one sure thing, regardless of whether American opinion swings in favor of integrated defense with Europe's or of a national defense (a "Gibralter of Western Civilization" -- as Hoover put it) conceived in hemispheric and oceanic terms, is that controls, restrictions and privations will multiply. Whether we try to shore up Europe's weak and leaky defense dykes or accept a world island dominated by Communism, we are on the road to the permanent armed camp and the garrison state. This is the sorry aftermath of the crusade that was supposed to enthrone the four freedoms, "everywhere in the world".

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Not Merely Gossip *A Supplement to* Human Events Vol. VIII, No. 1

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By Frank C. Hanighen January 3, 1951

FIVE-FOLD CRISIS: For anyone seeking to plan ahead for his business, or his personal life, the comparative calm of the past two weeks has offered a chance to take stock and to re-examine the international picture. While some remain apprehensive, others are lulled. But lest any of the latter assume that the crisis which arose in late November will "stabilize" or "taper off" in the near future, let them realize that this is no simple crisis. The present juncture of world affairs is multiple, is complex, is a veritable Hydra. In our view, the political problem facing our leaders is five-fold.

(1) First of all, there is the Korean military crisis which, for anxious parents and jittery Pentagon planners, takes first place. Even if MacArthur's forces stem the tide in the Seoul area, there remains the brooding threat of even greater hordes crossing from the Yalu.

(2) There is a diplomatic crisis with Britain which the "hands across the sea" refrain of the President and the Prime Minister can not conceal. Britain stays our hand against the Chinese Communists and entangles other areas of our foreign policy.

(3) Nor should we gloss over what amounts to a critical stage in the life of the U.N. That body, originally hailed as a general cure-all of world ills not only has fallen dismally short of its intended mission, but also -- far from providing aid for our soldiery -- actually undermines their stance with international intrigue.

(4) Next, the hour of decision has struck in Europe. Shall we actually defend the continent, thus risking another Korea? Or shall we pull out, abandon the attempt to meet a huge mass army with a mass army still to be raised? Either way, the answer will be painful. Hoover has courageously brought this crisis to a head.

(5) Finally, there is the continuing domestic political crisis. The recent elections reflected a sharply rising lack of confidence in the Executive which the latest reverses in Korea brought to a focus.

A tiny figure, Truman, seeks to deal with one of the greatest crises, indeed the most complicated one of all, in our national history. We will count ourselves lucky if convulsions resulting from this highly involved situation do not take place in rapid succession.

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CHINESE NATIONALISTS: Those in close touch with developments in the Far East say that the question is no longer: Can the State Department be induced to sanction use of Chiang Kai-shek's troops? The question -- they now assert -- is: How long can Chiang, desirous of achieving perfect unity with U.S. policy, restrain his troops, rank and file, from staging an invasion on the mainland of China? For the fact (sedulously ignored by the State Department), which officials just back from Formosa stress with much earnestness, is that the Chinese Nationalist soldiers on that island are figuratively straining at the leash. One important reason for their "rarin' to go" spirit is that many of them are natives of areas on the mainland almost within sight of Formosa, and they want to drive out the Communist authorities and free their relatives in the homeland. Besides, they have been training for many months with an invasion in view and they are naturally growing restless, desirous of performing their military mission.

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They may become further inspired, if popular sentiment in the United States grows for utilization of these valuable allies. Many have been stirred by the series in the Scripps-Howard newspapers by Clyde Farnsworth. These articles have extolled in some detail the martial record of the Nationalists, when they were given the arms and ammunition to fight. Mr. Farnsworth says that the stories, spread by the anti-China lobby in this country, about the Nationalists cravenly letting their country go by default are entirely untrue. As our casualties grow, it is expected that an increasing number of Americans will demand that pressure on our troops be relieved by utilizing the Nationalists.

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HIGH COMMAND WEAKNESS: Senator Robert A. Taft expressed a lack of confidence in our high military command last week. The doubts of the Senator are thoroughly shared by many members of Congress, as there leak out more details about the historic Blair House conferences of June 25 and 26. At those meetings, the President and his defense chiefs discussed ways and means of dealing with the first Communist aggression in Korea. At the last conference on the 26th, the President gave the order to send in the infantry.

We reported in this column last summer that the military men did not recommend a land invasion of Korea, but only mildly opposed it. We have just received from Administration sources a somewhat different story of the talks of those two days. Our informants claim that, while the defense chiefs did not recommend the operation, neither did they oppose it. Indeed, these military who are supposed to give the President good advice played an entirely equivocal role, it is said. They simply provided background facts and waited for the Commander-in-Chief to announce his decision. As Bradley was reported to have said, "We just take orders."

Now, one may discount this Administration account of the historic days to a certain extent. The White House circles are anxious to find a scapegoat, and their efforts to make MacArthur bear the onus alone have not succeeded too well. Nevertheless, whether or not Bradley and Collins will be selected for the role of sacrificial victim, their feeble attitude at the Blair House talks does not seem entirely out of character. Senator Taft's strictures have good foundation -- as any observer here knows -- in view of our military system. Brave, candid souls in the services have had bitter reason to learn that any independence of views does not bear fruit in stars on their shoulders. Mediocrities, opportunists, lickspittles have risen to high places because they know that it pays to be discreet with their superiors -- military and political.

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YULETIDE CELEBRATION: Pottery maker L. P. Reese, of Scio, Ohio, would not assert, of course, that a whoop-dee-do Yuletide party for his 1,000 employees on the whole top floor of a Pittsburgh hotel had anything to do with the excess profits tax that has just become law. But the joyous celebration -- with Mr. Reese's spending of $30,000 to bring his employees by special train for 80 miles, and providing a menu of shrimp cocktail, filet mignon smothered in mushroom sauce, and ice cream topped with cherries and flaming brandy, with an hour-long floor show and dancing to a 10-piece orchestra -- is reminiscent of the lavish celebrations, vacations in Florida, and relaxed expense accounts, so conspicuously in evidence during the late war when another excess profits tax was on the statute books. Mr. Reese carefully explained that his outpouring of Christmas generosity was a reward to loyal employees who had faithfully supported him in business adversity and in recovering from a disastrous fire, in 1947, which destroyed his plant. He called it a celebration of recovery from disaster, and broke the good news that each employee would get a 15-cent hourly wage increase, with $70,000 in vacation pay for all, too.

But the party was a symptom. It served to give persuasive force to one of the strongest of arguments made by men of industry against the excess profits tax as compared with higher standard corporate taxes. The tendency of the former, they said, makes for wasteful spending, fabulous parties and dinners, inflated advertis-

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ing budgets, extravagant vacation allowances, and concessions not in keeping with prudent and frugal management, when the issue is one of spending profits at home or paying them over in taxes. They called the tax inflationary in the extreme. It remains to be seen in this year whether their sage warnings will be heeded.

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SCUTTLING WAGE CONTROLS: With the invention of an "escalator clause" for insertion in wage contracts, Mr. Truman and his aides are pushing under the bed the dual control over wages and prices which Congress put into the Defense Production Act last summer, and restricting this provision of the law to prices.

Their action is taken, seemingly, in response to the outcries of union officials against any form of control of ceiling over wages in the rearmament effort, and clearly is a surrender to their demands. In application, the new clause would couple the level of wages to the cost-of-living index of the Bureau of Labor Statistics, and allow the reopening of wage contracts, with a wage adjustment, with each up or down movement in an index figure. It is an abandonment of the effort to maintain wage ceilings, notwithstanding the Defense Production Act, and would focus such efforts solely on holding down prices. Much more than that, under this clause the Wage Stabilization Board is reduced to a cipher; its only remaining duty would be to devise temporary wage standards pending negotiation of wage contracts with the escalator clause.

Significantly, the new clause serves to make the job of Price Administrator DiSalle doubly onerous, and it could be the means by which his whole structure of price controls is eventually overthrown. He has the added pressure of the clause on prices, but is without a means of easing the pressure. His only recourse, in any event, will be to lift price ceilings to a higher level as the clause generates more pressure on them. And to add to his difficulties, he has only a small staff of workers, and only a vaguely defined delegation of authority from Economic Stabilization Chief Valentine.

Chairman Ching, of WSB, is not making an easy surrender in the matter. He has called spokesmen for five labor groups and four management groups before his one-man board for conferences on January 10, 11 and 12 on what he calls "a study of the principal questions involved in the formulation of a general wage stabilization policy". Ching is unwilling to accept the escalator clause for automatic pay increases as it was put forward by Presidential Aide John Steelman, manifestly with Mr. Truman's approval; he says he intends to hammer out a national policy to keep wages level in the rearmament effort. The whole issue is whether wages can be "frozen" at all, or put under any effective ceiling if the cost of living continues to increase. For the vast number of people not covered by wage contracts, the clause would provide an escape for farm prices, union wages and industrial prices to chase each other up the spiral of ruinous inflation.

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PRICE SUBSIDIES: With White House meddling and interference, price control officials are beginning to recognize the futility of trying to hold price ceilings against the pressure of farm prices held at "parity", rents controlled under another law, and wages allowed to spiral under an escalator formula in wage pacts.

Stabilization Director Valentine and Price Chief DiSalle are looking over a leaf from OPA's book of controls in the recent war. This relates to the use of subsidies from the Treasury to aid in holding down prices, especially on food products, and on such other items as the wage escalator pressure grows strong. They would like to avoid open cash subsidies, for this device simply disassociates market prices from price ceilings, and makes it all the easier for unions to wangle big concessions, of one kind and another, from employers. If the subsidies do tend to reduce inflation, the concessions of various sorts add to it, and the Government absorbs a stupendous loss.

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PRESSURE ON SPONSORS: When Mr. Drew Pearson's radio sponsor, the Adams Hat Company, announced the termination of their contractual relationship with the commentator, there was much indignant talk in the press about interference with the freedom of speech and the press. The talk was linked to Senator McCarthy's speech urging that the commercial sponsors fire Pearson. Actually, the Adams Hat Company says it was not influenced by the McCarthy appeal, because it had made the decision to sever ties with Pearson a month before. So, the issue of "interference" in this case seems unfounded. However that may be, the issue deserves examination -- but not on an ad hoc basis. For the Leftist commentators who screamed "free press" or "free speech" have ignored the fact that the "pressure-on-sponsor" phenomenon is nothing new, nor is it confined to Leftists such as Pearson.

If those now invoking the Bill of Rights in such matters are sincere, they should look into some cases of recent years. A certain Mr. Upton Close might well give them information about his troubles which led to removal of his voice from the air waves. He could describe how the insurance company which sponsored his criticisms of the Administration policies was visited by leaders of certain pressure groups; and how the sponsor was threatened with the loss of a lot of insurance business. When Close went off the air, incidentally, none of those now yelling "Bill of Rights" were heard in like vein. As for Mr. Fulton Lewis, Jr., he could, if he wished, provide a history of unhappy experiences when he persisted in emphasizing various aspects of the Roosevelt regime in 1944. Indeed, there is so much rich material available that a probe, if impartially conducted, would step on many toes. Therefore, we doubt that our Leftist brethren would really care to pursue it farther than some indignant syndicated columns.

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THE REVOLT IN BOOKS: As the favorable popular response to the Hoover proposal indicates, there is rising something in the nature of a popular revolt against the Administration's conduct of foreign policy. The phenomenon is of more than solely political interest. It harmonizes with increasing signs that the general public and some of the intellectuals have shown an "upsurge" of rebellion against the ideas of the New Deal-dominated intelligentsia which have shaped and given formulation to the global idealism (the world "give-away" state) of Washington directors of policy.

One of the signs is the emergence of two young publishing houses -- Henry Regnery Company and Devin-Adair Company -- which against many obstacles are achieving greater and greater distribution and sale of "unpopular" books ("unpopular", that is, with the New Deal intelligentsia). The rise of these two companies recalls the success, during and after World War I, of such new publishing firms as Alfred A. Knopf and B. W. Huebsch. Mr. Knopf, it may be recalled, published H. L. Mencken's books (and later the Mencken monthly, the American Mercury) which led the revolt in politics and letters against the established order of those days. It may be that Mr. Knopf could well write a memoir on the obstacles which he encountered in the book reviews of that day and in the book trade generally, with his "revolutionary" books.

The obstacles from which such "unpopular" books have suffered in the last five years are well described in a well-documented and illuminating article by Irene Corbally Kuhn in the January American Legion Magazine. Mrs. Kuhn explains vividly why you find difficulty in obtaining a copy of the anti-Communist Seeds of Treason (gotten out by a small house), and why you find the sales assistant trying to palm off Owen Lattimore's Ordeal by Slander instead. She gives a clear picture of the decisive influence of the powerful book review sections of the New York Times and New York Herald-Tribune and how they have worked to smother good anti-Communist books and to boost those which reflect the Commie line.



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